Acceptance to Deploy

Instructions

Version 1.3 ● 31 DEC 2012

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R E V I E W   G A T E

Acceptance to Deploy Version History

Current Framework tools are available on the Framework Web site.

Release Date	Description
31-Dec-2012	Version 1.3 released.
	Revised Instructions and Template to reflect changes recommended by the Framework Change Advisory Board (CAB) and approved by DIR (Change request 68).
28-Sep-2007	Version 1.2 released.
	Revised Instructions to reflect an emergency change approved by DIR (Change request 39).
1-Sep-2007	Version 1.1 released.
	Revised Instructions to reflect changes recommended by the Framework Change Advisory Board (CAB) and approved by DIR (Change requests 34 and 37).
30-Jun-2006	Version 1.0 Instructions and Template Released.

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Introduction

State government, as well as other public and private sector organizations, has consistently struggled to ensure stakeholders are satisfied with business outcomes resulting from delivery of information resources projects. In many cases, products and/or services are turned over to business operations without clear acceptance or agreement of operations limitations, constraints, or other conditions.

The Texas Project Delivery Framework (Framework) includes the Acceptance to Deploy tool to provide a consistent method for formal product and/or service acceptance before that product and/or service becomes operational. Stakeholders, typically the customer, users, or technical staff, are responsible for deployment acceptance and must agree the product and/or service can transition to operational status. These stakeholder representatives should accept project deliverables before deployment in order to clearly indicate buy-in to business outcomes resulting from product and/or service use.

The acceptance to deploy process integrates different aspects of product and/or service acceptance. The template captures specific data to provide assurance the project team has proactively collaborated with stakeholder representatives to understand and accept/reject, for example, constraints and limitations resulting from the operational product and/or service. Acceptance to deploy process considers:

- contingencies and/or conditions for the accepted products and/or services

- formal mechanisms (e.g., meeting, documentation) that specifically focus on obtaining approval to deploy from stakeholder representatives

- verification that stakeholder representatives have evaluated and understand the impact of accepting the product and/or service

- identification of any outstanding issues and planned resolutions to address those issues

Use of the Acceptance to Deploy

Overview

Acceptance to Deploy is a key deliverable of the Framework's Project Implementation review gate. Review the Project Closeout Report Instructions for information about the Acceptance to Deploy in relation to the Project Closeout Report. Before deployment occurs, stakeholder representatives must accept the product and/or service is ready to become operational by signing the Acceptance to Deploy.

An Acceptance to Deploy endorsed by stakeholder representatives indicates approval to deploy. Final acceptance of the product and/or service occurs after an agreed-upon operational status period following deployment. Stakeholder representatives agree to final product and/or service acceptance as part of project closeout.

Project planning and management are iterative processes. Thus, use of the Acceptance to Deploy assumes that project information (e.g., project requirements and quality/performance data) has been analyzed and reviewed throughout the project life cycle. Stakeholder representatives use this information to determine acceptance of the product and/or service based on assessment of deployment readiness. Refer to the Framework Core Principles regarding evolution of project delivery information over the life of the project.

Use of the Acceptance to Deploy assumes the agency uses an issues management process. Open issues documented as part of the acceptance process are managed, tracked, and closed based on the issues management process used by the agency.

For information resources projects that require the procurement of goods and/or services to achieve the project business goals and objectives, use the Project Plan, in conjunction with the Acquisition Plan, to plan and manage the project activities (e.g., contract administration, vendor relationship management, deliverables acceptance). For projects involving procurement, refer to the Solicitation and Contracting review gate to ensure actual acceptance activities align with planned acceptance activities.

Applicability

An Acceptance to Deploy must be used for any project classified as a major information resources project, and for certain major contracts. Refer to the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) Contract Management Guide for guidance on which major contracts are required to use the Framework.

Governance and Scope

The designated stakeholder representative should complete the Acceptance to Deploy in close collaboration with the Executive Sponsor and Technology Sponsor. The Executive Sponsor must identify a Technology Sponsor. The Technology Sponsor is typically the Information Resources Manager (IRM), or the IRM may choose to designate another technology expert within the agency. The Executive Sponsor and Technology Sponsor must accept responsibility for the formal acceptance of the product and/or service.

Use the Acceptance to Deploy in conjunction with agency level governance structures and practices for product and/or service acceptance. For example, the agency may choose to identify other internal practices that are required in conjunction with the Acceptance to Deploy such as elevation procedures in case stakeholder representatives choose not to accept the product and/or service at all. As another example, the agency may choose to use the Acceptance to Deploy at the end of project phases in addition to at the end of projects.

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Section 1. General Information

Complete the general background information for the project. Specify the contact and Project Manager information. The contact individual and Project Manager may be the same person.

Section 2. Project Deliverables

For each product and/or service delivered as part of the project, identify the acceptance date and any contingencies and/or conditions related to acceptance of the product and/or service. Refer to other project documentation if these elements are already captured in a different source.

The acceptance date (mm/dd/yy) is the date stakeholder representatives agree the product and/or service is ready to become operational. In terms of the acceptance dates, various life cycle models guide the processes involved during acceptance and deployment of project deliverables. Project deliverable acceptance information may be identified over time. For example, a phased rollout may involve multiple phases to deploy full telecommunications functionality. A phased user base rollout may deploy a software product in a series of phases.

In terms of contingencies or conditions, *contingencies* represent acceptance of the product and/or service based on an understood and clearly defined stipulation, performance measure, clause, provision, etc. For example, a system may be temporarily accepted for six months until metrics for wireless barcode scanner availability and input/output (I/O) throughput reaches pre-determined acceptance levels.

Conditions indicate acceptance of the product and/or service based on an agreed-upon circumstance, fact, situation, etc. For example, five of 200 requirements may have not been implemented because of technical constraints and/or business process changes. For example, stakeholder representatives may agree to accept a product although test results are slightly below an acceptable or agreed-upon level.

Section 3. Acceptance Agreement

Acceptance agreement includes key factors that indicate how formal acceptance of the product and/or service (in terms of operational readiness) was achieved. The method, stakeholder representatives, and supporting documentation are documented.

3.1 Method

Describe the mechanism used to obtain formal agreement to deploy. The method used should represent a clear and distinct effort to determine if stakeholder representatives agree the product and/or service should become operational. For example, the mechanism may involve a face-to-face meeting, teleconference, or some other formal approach to specifically obtain and document acceptance of the product and/or service.

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3.2   Representatives

Identify who was involved in acceptance to deploy, including which functional areas (e.g., program staff, security, finance, vendor, quality) were represented. Identify the name and role of each representative. All project stakeholders should be considered for involvement in acceptance to deploy. Consider indicating which areas were not represented, as well as which of these areas received management approval for non-participation.

3.3   Supporting Documentation

Describe documents used as supporting material during acceptance to deploy, including whether the documents required formal signature approval by the customer or other stakeholders. Identify those who signed the document for approval. These supporting materials, although separate from the Acceptance to Deploy, include documents that are directly related to acceptance of the product and/or service. For example, documentation related to an internal vendor process or a federal mandate may support the acceptance process.

Section 4. Acceptance to Deploy Checklist

The Acceptance to Deploy Checklist prompts stakeholder representatives to formally focus on and agree whether certain operational factors have been addressed. Responding to these questions helps to ensure an integrated review from different perspectives (e.g., test, risk, service readiness, business/technical skills transfer, documentation, and training) is completed. "You" refers to all stakeholder representatives.

As part of the project life cycle, numerous activities and deliverables may require completion before the product and/or service is ready to become operational. For example, a Deployment Plan or Product Release Plan may be used to document core activities that are necessary to effectively move a technology-based product and/or service to operational status. An Operations and Maintenance Plan, sometimes documented as part of a Deployment Plan, may be used to document core activities for operation and maintenance of the product and/or service following deployment. A service level agreement (SLA) may be used to document conditions for service readiness and operations.

For each "no" response, include an issue in the Open Issues section. Address "no" responses as part of an issues management process. Open issues documented as part of the acceptance process are managed, tracked, and closed based on issues management.

Section 5. Open Issues

Summarize any open issues and plans for resolution within the context of formally accepting the product and/or service. These open issues are considered general to the entire project. For example, an open issue may involve final payment to a vendor. A percentage or an agreed-upon

portion of a contract payment may have been withheld or retained until operational status is achieved under certain conditions for a period of time. This may have been done in an effort to ensure full performance of the product and/or service based on contract terms.

Open issues may include conditions stipulated for deployment. This acceptance scenario means the product and/or service can be deployed even though open issues exist. For example, the stakeholder representatives may accept the product and/or service is ready for deployment only if specific issues are addressed. Identify these specific issues along with plans for resolution.

Open issues may include issues for any "no" responses in the Acceptance to Deploy Checklist. In contrast, this acceptance scenario means the product and/or service can not be deployed until these open issues are addressed. For example, the stakeholder representatives may not accept that the product and/or service is ready to be deployed (as evidence by one or more "no" responses) unless specific issues are tracked to closure. The acceptance to deploy process would then be reinitiated to ensure all issues have been addressed and managed to closure. Identify the specific issues along with plans for resolution.

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